

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 ACDE-00 /026 W
-----191837Z 089353 /40

P 191624Z MAY 77
FM USDEL MBFR VIENNA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2144
USDEL SECRETARY IN GENEVA PRIORITY

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 MBFR VIENNA 0245

EXDIS

NOFORN

DEPT PASS DEFENSE

FROM US REP MBFR

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PARM, NATO
SUBJ: MBFR: BILATERAL CONVERSATION WITH SOVIET REPRESENTATIVES
OF APRIL 11, 1977

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. AT US INVITATION, US REP AND DEPREP MET WITH
SOVIET REPS TARASOV AND SHUSTOV TO REVIEW SITUATION AT BEGINNING
OF NEGOTIATION ROUND. DISCUSSION FOCUSED MAINLY ON UNACCEPTABILITY
OF SOVIET POSITION ON ARMAMENT REDUCTIONS AND ON PROBLEMS THE
SOVIETS SAW WITH THE WESTERN POSITION ON THIS TOPIC. TARASOV
MADE NO NEW PROPOSALS, NOR DID HE REFER TO HIS PERSONAL SUGGESTION
AT THE END OF THE LAST ROUND TO MOVE TO EQUAL MANPOWER CEILINGS
ON THE BASIS OF EASTERN DATA ON WARSAW PACT FORCES. END SUMMARY

2. US REPS COMPLAINED ABOUT TWO QUESTIONS BY SOVIET TASS
CORRESPONDENTS IN END OF ROUND PRESS CONFERENCE ON APRIL 15
INDICATING THAT WEST HAD REFUSED TO TABLE NATIONAL TOTALS. THEY
ALSO COMMENTED ON FACT THAT, IN THE SAME PRESS CONFERENCE,
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SOVIET DELEGATION PRESS OFFICER HAD GIVEN EXTENSIVE REVIEW OF
TARASOV'S END OF ROUND PLENARY SPEECH IN ADDITION TO THE
NORMAL END OF ROUND PRESS REVIEW BY CZECHOSLOVAK REP. TARASOV
SAID HE WOULD LOOK INTO BEHAVIOR OF TASS CORRESPONDENT.
HOWEVER, AS TO THE GENERAL TOPIC OF PRESS PUBLICITY HE RECALLED
THAT HE HAD WARNED WESTERN REPS IN FIRST INFORMAL OF THE LAST
ROUND THAT THE WARSAW PACT DELEGATIONS WOULD NOT SIT BY

INACTIVE AND ACCEPT WESTERN PRESS LEAKS ABOUT THE DATA DISCUSSION. MOREOVER, THE WESTERN PRESS HAD SINCE THE OUTSET OF THE NEGOTIATIONS PRESENTED A DISTORTED PICTURE OF THE EASTERN POSITION, AND THIS HAD TO BE CORRECTED.

3. SHUSTOV SAID HE WAS CONTINUALLY BEING ASKED WHETHER THE US MADE A CONNECTION OR LINK BETWEEN THE SALT NEGOTIATIONS AND THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS. US REP REPLIED THAT THE USG HAD ESTABLISHED NO RPT NO LINKAGE, ALTHOUGH IT WAS CLAR THAT MOVEMENT IN THE SALT TALKS WOULD HAVE A POSITIVE IMPACT ON THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS. TARASOV AGREED. SHUSTOV COMPLAINED THAT THE MAY 11 COMMUNIQUE OF THE LONDON MINISTERIAL MEETING HAD ACCUSED THE WARSAW PACT OF INCREASING THEIR OFFENSIVE CAPABILITIES IN CENTRAL EUROPE. SHUSTOV BELIEVED SUCH ACCUSATIONS MIGHT BE RESPONDED TO IN KIND AND THAT SUCH AN EXCHANGE COULD HAVE A NEGATIVE AFFECT ON THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE VIENNA TALKS. US REP SAID WESTERN REPS HAD ALREADY POINTED OUT TO EASTERN REPS THAT THE EAST HAD BEEN INCREASING THE NUMBER OF ITS MAJOR ARMAMENTS IN THE AREA DURING THE PERIOD OF THE NEGOTIATIONS AND MODERNIZING THESE ARMAMENTS AS WELL. IT WAS NATURAL THAT THIS DEVELOPMENT SHOULD GIVE RISE TO CONCERN.

4. SHUSTOV COMMENTED THAT CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT HAD INDICATED THAT THE WEST WAS CONSIDERING NEW INITIATIVES IN THE VIENNA TALKS. WERE US REPS IN POSITION TO GIVE ANY DETAILS? US REP SAID SCHMIDT HAD PROPOSED THAT THE VIENNA TALKS BE GIVEN POLITICAL IMPETUS. TARASOV COMMENTED THAT THIS ANSWER MEANT THAT THE EAST WAS EXPECTED TO TAKE ALL THE INITIATIVES. TARASOV REFERRED TO STATEMENT OF UK REP IN MAY 17 INFORMAL SESSION THAT WESTERN
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AUTHORITIES WERE CONSIDERING HOW BEST TO ADVANCE THE DATA DISCUSSION. COULD US REP GIVE ANY DETAILS? US REP CONFIRMED THAT WESTERN AUTHORITIES WERE CONSIDERING NEXT STEP, BUT SAID NO DECISIONS HAD YET BEEN REACHED. TARASOV VOLUNTEERED THAT SOVIET REPS HAD NO AUTHORITY TO GO BEYOND DISAGGREGATION TO SHOW NATIONAL TOTALS.

5. TARASOV ASKED WHETHER THERE WAS ANY CHANGE IN THE WESTERN POSITION REGARDING REDUCTION OF AIR FORCES? US REP SAID THE WEST HAD NOT CHANGED ITS POSITION. IT CONTINUED OPPOSED TO REDUCTION OF AIR FORCES AS A FORCE ELEMENT AND TO REDUCTION OF AIR FORCE MANPOWER. IT REMAINED WILLING TO COVER AIR FORCE MANPOWER UNDER THE COMMON COLLECTIVE CEILING. TARASOV COMMENTED THAT, GIVEN WESTERN DATA ON NATO FORCES AND THE WESTERN PROPOSAL FOR A 900,000 MAN COMMON CEILING, THE WESTERN PROPOSAL WOULD PERMIT THE WEST TO INCREASE ITS AIR FORCE MANPOWER. US REP SAID THAT, WHEN WESTERN REPS HAD ADVANCED THE 900,000 FIGURE, THEY HAD MADE CLEAR IT WAS ILLUSTRATIVE AND APPROXIMATE. A SPECIFIC FIGURE IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD OF 900,000 COULD BE SETTLED LATER BY MUTUAL AGREEMENT.

6. US REP REFERRED TO THE NEED FOR MOVEMENT IN THE NEGOTIATIONS AND TO HIS EARLIER SUGGESTION TO SOVIET REPS THAT SOVIETS REVISE THEIR CONCEPT THAT EACH SIDE SHOULD REDUCE THE SAME ARMAMENTS AND MOVE TO THE WESTERN CONCEPT OF REDUCING SELECTED ARMAMENTS. HE POINTED OUT THAT ACCEPTANCE OF EVEN THE MODIFIED FEBRUARY 1976 VERSION OF THE EASTERN APPROACH TO ARMAMENT REDUCTIONS WOULD CONTRACTUALIZE EASTERN NUMERICAL SUPERIORITY IN MOST OF THESE ARMAMENTS.

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED DEFENSE.

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P 191624Z MAY 77
FM USDEL MBFR VIENNA
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USDEL SECRETARY IN GENEVA PRIORITY

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 MBFR VIENNA 0245

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FROM US REP MBFR

7. TARASOV CONFIRMED THAT THE EASTERN FEBRUARY 1976 PROPOSAL VISUALIZED STAGE I REDUCTION BY THE US AND USSR OF ONLY THE ARMAMENTS SPECIFIED IN IT. TARASOV SAID THE WESTERN CONCEPTUAL APPROACH TO ARMAMENT REDUCTIONS CONTAINED TWO MAJOR PROBLEMS FOR THE SOVIETS. FIRST, THE WESTERN EUROPEANS DID NOT ENVISAGE ANY ARMS REDUCTIONS. IF A FIRST STAGE AGREEMENT WAS REACHED BASED EITHER ON WARSAW PACT OR WESTERN MODEL AS REGARDS REDUCTION OF US AND SOVIET ARMEMENTS, IN THE SECOND STAGE, THE WESTERN EUROPEANS MIGHT REFUSE TO REDUCE ANY ARMAMENTS. IF THEY REFUSED, THE SOVIETS COULD NOT OBLIGE THEM TO AGREE TO REDUCE ARMAMENTS. THIS WOULD LEAVE THE SOVIETS WITH A LIMITATION ON THE ARMAMENTS WHOSE REDUCTION HAD BEEN AGREED

IN THE FIRST STAGE. BUT THERE WOULD BE NO LIMITATION WHATEVER ON THE ARMAMENTS OF THE WESTERN EUROPEANS WHICH COULD EVEN INCREASE. SECOND, IF THE US REDUCED AND LIMITED ONLY NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND THE SOVIETS REDUCED TANKS, NOTHING WOULD PREVENT INCREASES IN US TANKS. THE US AND THE FRG BOTH WERE CONTEMPLATING THE PRODUCTION OF NEW MODELS OF TANKS. THE SOVIETS WOULD THEN BE IN SECRET

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A POSITION OF HAVING ACCEPTED A LIMITATION ON THEIR TANKS AND THEN HAVING THE US AND THE FRG INCREASE THEIR TANKS.

8. US REP SAID THAT THIS MIGHT BE A THEORETICAL POSSIBILITY BUT NOT A REAL ONE IN VIEW OF THE INCREASING UNIT COSTS OF TANKS AND BUDGETARY PRESSURES IN THE WEST. TARASOV SAID THE PROPOSAL TO REDUCE US NUCLEAR WARHEADS WAS NOT IMPRESSIVE. THE US HAD MORE THAN IT NEEDED IN CENTRAL EUROPE ANYHOW. US REP SAID THE WESTERN PROPOSAL TO LIMIT THE RESIDUAL LEVEL OF US NUCLEAR WARHEADS OF ALL TYPES WAS IMPORTANT. THERE WAS NO ASSURANCE THAT THE PRESENT LEVEL WOULD NOT BE INCREASED IN THE ABSENCE OF AN AGREEMENT. TARASOV SAID THAT SINCE THE WEST REJECTED LIMITATIONS ON WESTERN EUROPEAN NUCLEAR DELIVERY SYSTEMS WHOSE WITHDRAWAL HAD BEEN PROPOSED BY THE US, THERE WAS NOTHING TO PREVENT THE US FROM SELLING OR GIVING ITS WITHDRAWN SYSTEMS TO THE WESTERN EUROPEANS WHO MIGHT EVEN INCREASE THEIR STOCKS OF THESE ARMAMENTS BY AMOUNTS LARGER THAN THE US REDUCTIONS.

9. SHUSTOV SAID, AS HE UNDERSTOOD IT, THE WESTERN CONCEPT WAS TO REDUCE SELECTED ARMAMENTS. THE WEST HAD PROPOSED WITHDRAWAL OF SOVIET TANKS AND US NUCLEAR ARMAMENTS. WAS IT POSSIBLE IN THEORETICAL TERMS TO THINK OF A THIRD TYPE OF ARMAMENTS WHICH COULD BE ADDED TO THIS LIST? US REP SAID THIS WOULD BE DIFFICULT BECAUSE A TYPE OF ARMAMENT WOULD HAVE TO BE FOUND WHOSE REDUCTION AND LIMITATION WOULD LEAVE NEITHER SIDE WITH A NUMERICAL SUPERIORITY IN RESIDUAL LEVELS.

10. TARASOV SAID ARMAMENT REDUCTIONS WERE A BIGGER PROBLEM THAN MANPOWER REDUCTIONS. AFTER ALL, AS REGARDS MANPOWER, BOTH SIDES AGREED IN PRINCIPLE THAT NEITHER SIDE SHOULD HAVE AN ADVANTAGE AFTER REDUCTIONS. ALL THE WEST WOULD HAVE TO DO IN DUE COURSE WAS TO ACCEPT THE EASTERN FIGURES ON WARSAW PACT MANPOWER.

11. US REP SAID HE THOUGHT THE REVERSE WAS TRUE. THE WEST HAD SAID THAT IF THE EAST COULD PRODUCE CONVINCING EVIDENCE, SECRET

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THE WEST WOULD ALTER ITS MANPOWER FIGURES, BUT HE BELIEVED THAT THE MARGIN FOR AN ADJUSTMENT OF THIS KIND WAS A LIMITED ONE AND THAT AT THE END OF THE PROCESS, A SUBSTANTIAL EASTERN SUPERIORITY WOULD BE SHOWN TO EXIST.

12. TARASOV MADE NO MENTION DURING THIS DISCUSSION OF HIS PERSONAL SUGGESTION OF APRIL 11 (REF MBFR VIENNA 0184) THAT BOTH SIDES REDUCE TO AN EQUAL CEILING OF 900,000 ON THE BASIS OF EASTERN DATA NOR DID HE REFER TO EASTERN FREEZE PROPOSAL.
END NOFORN

13. US REP BRIEF AD HOC GROUP ON THE ABOVE CONVERSATION LATER ON MAY 18 ALONG FOLLOWING LINES:

A. US REPS COMPLAINED TO THE SOVIETS ABOUT THE EAST'S BEHAVIOR AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE AT THE END OF THE LAST ROUND; POINTING SPECIFICALLY TO THEIR USE OF TWO SPOKESMEN AND TO THE OBVIOUSLY PLANTED QUESTION CONCERNING THE TABLING OF NATIONAL TOTALS WHICH THE TASS CORRESPONDENT HAD POSED TO BOTH THE EASTERN AND THE WESTERN SPOKESMEN.

B. SOVIET REPS ASKED IF THE WEST WOULD ALTER ITS POSITION ON AIR FORCE REDUCTIONS. US REPS REPLIED NEGATIVELY. US REPS PROBED THE SOVIETS ON THEIR VIEWS ON ARMAMENTS REDUCTIONS. IN DOING SO, US REPS PRESSED THE CASE FOR THE MIXED PACKAGE APPROACH AS THE WAY TO RESOLVE THE ARMAMENTS ISSUE. THE SOVIETS LISTENED CAREFULLY BUT EXPRESSED NO NEW VIEWS. RESOR

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED DEFENSE.

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